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# Are Australian TV Advertisers Aware of Evolving Online Information Search Patterns?

ANDREJ MIKLOSİK<sup>1</sup>, MARTIN KUČHTA<sup>2</sup>, MARIA HASPROVA<sup>3</sup>, AND NINA EVANS<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Marketing Department, Faculty of Management, Comenius University in Bratislava, 83104 Bratislava, Slovakia

<sup>2</sup>Department of Business Informatics, Faculty of Commerce, University of Economics in Bratislava, 85235 Bratislava, Slovakia

<sup>3</sup>Marketing Department, Faculty of Commerce, University of Economics in Bratislava, 85235 Bratislava, Slovakia

<sup>4</sup>UniSA STEM, University of South Australia, Adelaide, SA 5001, Australia

Corresponding author: Andrej Miklosik (andrej.miklosik@fm.uniba.sk)

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**ABSTRACT** The viewers' response to television advertising has changed dramatically over the past years. Search visibility of advertisers has become of paramount importance to ensure that communication messages are followed up appropriately, and that the specific brand is considered in the customer decision-making process. This paper examines the effectiveness of communication campaigns that include TV advertisements. Specifically, it determines if, and to what extent, the advertisers of selected Australian TV advertising campaigns are visible in full-text searches on Google for a variety of relevant keywords. The visibility of advertisers is measured as the number of keyword searches that result in a high ranking on the search engine results page, average ranking, and site visibility. The results revealed notable differences in the visibility of advertisers in searches. Enhancing their visibility represents a challenge for companies striving to optimise the delivery of their communication message(s) across the entire spectrum of traditional and online media.

**INDEX TERMS** Cross-device search, cross-session search, customer journey, google search, search engine marketing, search visibility, TV advertising, TV commercials, TV spots.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Thanks to the widespread availability of internet connected multimedia devices, users' online search patterns have changed with cross-device search becoming an emerging context for information seeking [1]. People are using multiple devices to search for information about products they might consider purchasing. Companies need to understand how these processes work and reflect this in their marketing strategies, including communication campaigns. To ensure successful deployment of marketing strategies, organisation's websites and other online resources should contain the topics consumers look for while searching for information. Digital transformation of marketing cannot be stopped [2]. Understanding how the purchasing decision-making process has evolved, mainly due to technological changes over the past years, is of great importance. Enhanced comprehension of the consumer decision journey requires the deployment of integrated marketing communication programs that reflect interaction between traditional and new media (e.g. search,

display, mobile, TV, and social media) to affect consumer decision making [3].

This paper examines whether the importance of high search visibility is reflected in search engine marketing strategies of companies paying for TV advertisements. Specifically, it examines whether, and to what extent, the main message, brand, and products from TV advertisements are visible in full-text searches on Google. Based on this, it can be determined whether the advertised brand can still be considered by consumers using online search in response to the TV advertisement and to move between devices later in the information search process. Selected Australian TV advertising campaigns are analysed to determine whether advertisers are aware of the increased importance of search visibility on the effectiveness of their TV campaigns.

## II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### A. ONLINE INFORMATION SEARCH

Gathering information to evaluate alternatives and support the final decision making has always been considered a fundamental element of the purchasing decision-making process. Information search represents the second stage in

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the five-stage model of consumer behaviour [4]. However, searching for information can form a part of all five stages. Consumers often use multiple sources to gather the information they need to decide which product is the best to satisfy their need. These sources often include influencers, family and friends, product reviews, price comparisons, et cetera. The search for information gets more complex whenever the product is new, infrequently purchased, and more expensive. However, searching for additional information about the features, health effects, current price, and other parameters can be quite common even for regularly purchased goods and services, especially as this has been markedly facilitated by the emergence of specific websites whose sole purpose is to generate such comparisons e.g., Skyscanner, GoCompare, Rome2Rio, etc.

Consumers can now find more information online - about products, brands, and companies - than ever before. This includes official communications from the companies and user-generated content, including reviews and ratings [5]. Big data containing traces of online user behaviour confirm the role of information search in the customer journey leading to product sales [6]. Numerous studies have confirmed the links between the consumer interest, product sales and consumer search activity on the internet [7]–[10]. Therefore, ensuring the company and its products are visible when people search for information is crucial, and companies are including search visibility in their marketing strategies [11]–[13]. This is of paramount importance with consumers from generations Y (millennials) and Z (digital natives), who grew up surrounded by latest technologies. These consumers are almost always online, seamlessly using and switching between multiple devices. They have access to significantly more information than any other previous generation [14].

There are several search engines that can be considered when thinking of search visibility, depending on the territories where products are sold. Google is a long-term global leader in the search market and in most countries, it is the first and sometimes the only search engine companies focus on. In 2019 [15], 92.06% online searches were made on Google worldwide, followed by Bing (2.61%), Yahoo! (1.79%), Baidu (1.16%), and Yandex (0.56%). Millions of websites are added to and removed from Google and Bing every year [16], with business models of many companies highly depending on search traffic. Being a monopoly on the search market, any change in Google's search algorithms significantly impacts millions of websites, whether resulting in an increase or decline in search traffic [17].

Ensuring good visibility in online searches is crucial to ensuring that prospective customers get the chance to consider a company's products while they search for information. Whether it is at an early stage of decision making (when general information is gathered), at a later stage (where brands are compared), or even when a local reseller is searched, such visibility/accessibility of pertinent information remains a key factor in successful marketing. In recent years, the importance of visibility in local searches has been intensely

discussed. Search engines, led by Google, have focused on optimising search results for people searching for local businesses. Over a two-year period, there was a 900%+ growth in mobile searches for 'near me today/tonight' [18]. 88% of Google searches for local information are performed by consumers [19]. 46% of shoppers confirm inventory online before going to a store [18].

## **B. SEARCH VISIBILITY IN CONTEXT OF CROSS-DEVICE AND CROSS-SESSION SEARCH**

Being visible in online searches is particularly important when running communication campaigns that include other media. Users usually do not actively consume advertisements (if not avoiding them altogether). Thus, advertisers should be prepared in case the message gets through and users decide to act. If consumers are interested in the TV or radio spot, or the message on the billboard, they might want to find out more about the company or product. A significant relationship between TV advertising and consumers' tendency to search branded keywords has been confirmed [20], [21]. Even TV ads with small audiences produce detectable search spikes for the advertised brand, with 75% of incremental search volume occurring within two minutes [22]. The research for more information is sometimes directly triggered by advertisements [23]. To learn more, consumers can search online when they first encounter a brand/product via advertisement, or they can perform the search later. The search naturally often starts on a device they were using while watching TV. To retain their attention, the website of the product or company needs to rank at the top of search results for entered keywords. If not, consumers might lose interest or find competitors' websites and research their products instead. It has been confirmed that consumer search represents an intermediate between advertising and purchase behaviour [24].

According to the Google study on user behaviour related to using multiple screens [25], the sequential mode of using more screens is also relevant for marketers. When using parallel mode, the user focuses on two screens at the same time. In sequential mode, the user begins the information search on one device and later continues on another. This often happens if a search begins on a mobile device (e.g. while watching TV, at school or at work) and then subsequently continues on a laptop or desktop computer. 90% of multiple device owners switch between screens to complete tasks, using an average of three different combinations every day [26]. Mobile users are more likely to do research on their smartphone or tablet, but if they're looking to make a purchase, they turn to a desktop PC [27]. In the literature, the terms "cross-session" and "cross-device" for searches have been established to define behaviours of users who do not finish the research within one (single-session) search. Cross-session searches relate to more complex search tasks performed over longer time spans [28]–[30], whereas cross-device searches refer to researching a topic on multiple devices [30]–[32]. Users review the same web pages to recover their previous query

status [33]. The challenge for users is how to continue where they had previously finished. If they were looking at certain websites, the question is how to return on the same, or a different device. Searching again for keywords and topics relevant to what they were researching before, to find the resources they have accessed in a previous session, is one of the ways for users to achieve this in the context of mobile-to-desktop web searching [31]. As many as 40% of all search queries are re-finding queries, confirming the role of online searches in the process of search for information [34].

Search visibility is crucial for TV campaign-related keywords to achieve an efficient flow of the communicated message to the consumer and to ensure that it dissipates through the entire interconnected network of traditional and online media. Businesses should therefore focus not only on the visibility of a general set of keywords related to their brand, their products, the needs their products satisfy, competitors' products etc. but also specifically on messages and products that are featured in their communication campaigns. To run a fully integrated communication campaign, advertisers need to incorporate search engine marketing strategies closely relating to the campaign into the marketing mix. This starts with keyword analysis revealing which short and long-tail keywords are relevant to the campaign and continues by checking current rankings for these keywords. Finally, by the time the campaign is launched, search visibility in top positions in defined search engines, languages, and markets needs to be achieved. High visibility in searches for the campaign-related keywords should be maintained throughout the campaign and even after it has finished.

### C. INTEGRATED SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING STRATEGY

Businesses have two options for gaining visibility in search engines. These can be combined to achieve optimal results, leading to an integrated search engine marketing strategy. Paid advertising, also referred to as pay-per-click (PPC), gets them on top of search results for any keywords they select and have relevant advertisements for, as long as they keep paying for clicks. Using search engine optimisation (SEO) enables them getting higher positions in organic search results – unpaid results displayed based on the decision of the search engine's algorithm striving to provide search results best matching the keywords searched. Only on Google, 40,000 search queries are processed every second which equates to more than 3.5 billion searches each day [35]. With search visibility being so important and with so many searches performed daily, businesses need to work on their organic search rankings to foster sustainability of their search rankings i.e., higher organic search visibility facilitates the reduction of the search advertising spending. When deploying their search engine advertising strategies, companies need to realise that they form part of an integrated online activities system. Cross-channel effects exist between online advertising and traditional media [36] and there are numerous factors, including: attribution strategies [37]; competition [38], [39];

and, social media mentions [40] which affect cost per click, click-through rates and conversion rates.

To get traffic from keywords for businesses that are visible in search engines, their websites or other resources, such as images, videos (for example on YouTube) or other social media profiles, should rank on the first search engine results page (SERP). Statistics confirm that almost no traffic is gained from ranking on the second SERP and beyond: 92% of searchers will pick businesses on the first page of local search results [19]. There are different click-through rates for each organic position on the first SERP, varying based on the type of search (brand, non-branded; short-tail, long-tail; intention type etc.) industry or device used (desktop, laptop or mobile). Average click-through rates also vary across research studies. Generally, research confirms that click-through rates significantly decrease with each position. The aggregated data for almost 2.5 million of searches in January 2019 show that the first position gets 23.48% of clicks on mobiles and 30.58% on desktops, the second position 14.46% on mobiles and 15.6% on desktops, and the third position 9.76% on mobiles and 10.26% on desktops [41]. The first three positions on the SERP thus account for almost half of the clicks and traffic (47.7%) on mobile devices and more than half (56.44%) on desktops.

For many websites, clicks from organic search results, whether leading directly to them or to one of their social media profiles, represent the most important source of traffic and enquiries. By having an SEO strategy and implementation program in place they can be sure their organic rankings sustain and improve over time. This can be achieved thanks to including a variety of keywords to focus on, working on the content (on-site SEO) and building the authority of the website and individual pages (off-site SEO). Many factors affect organic search visibility that evolve over time. Therefore, having a framework to evaluate them for the specific market, industry, and combination of keywords can help businesses stay ahead of the competition [42]. Including both paid and organic search rankings in the search engine marketing strategy (and their optimal balance in time), can make a great difference in the search visibility of the company and its products. Having more than one result on a SERP can be considered an ultimate optimisation goal, with the opportunity of having images, videos, social media profiles or other company-controlled websites featured on SERPs for relevant keywords. Moreover, when consumers interact with both paid and organic searches, the conversion probability increases in the short-term compared to when users only interact with one channel [43].

### III. AIMS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In the theoretical background, four types of studies were identified: 1) Studies showing that users search for information online at all stages of the purchase decision-making process and that there is a positive correlation between online searches and sales; 2) Studies on user behaviour in relation to traditional and online media, including parallel content

consumption via multiple screens; 3) Studies on the consumer decision journey revealing how users move between various devices and use multiple sessions in the process of information search; 4) Studies indicating the positive correlation between the existence of TV advertising and the volume of searches for campaign-related keywords. The importance of search visibility for TV-campaign related keywords and the link between the search visibility - for these keywords - and the effectiveness of the overall campaign was established.

The question whether TV advertisers foster high search visibility to improve the effectiveness of their communication campaigns has not been investigated before. Based on this research gap, the focus of the presented study is to discover whether companies manage to build the search visibility for their communication campaigns. The researchers focused on the Australian market and examined TV advertising campaigns that are present in the Australian television broadcasting. The main aim of this study is to determine the level of search visibility that Australian TV advertisers achieve when consumers search for keywords related to their TV advertisements. To gain greater insight into the issues related to the TV advertising campaign search visibility, the research questions were as follows:

- RQ1. To what extent do Australian TV advertisers use paid search advertising to increase the search visibility of advertisers for the campaign-related keywords?
- RQ2. For how many keywords do websites of Australian TV advertisers rank on the first page, especially within the first three, five and ten positions on the SERP?
- RQ3. What is the average search ranking of websites of Australian TV advertisers?

To improve understanding of the search engine marketing strategy that relates to these TV campaigns, the researchers examined the overall search visibility, including the results of paid advertisements and organic searches. The researchers also analysed the extent to which each of these two forms (paid or organic) contributes to the final search visibility.

#### IV. METHODOLOGY

To collect and analyse data about the Australian TV campaigns and the search visibility of websites related to them, a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods was used. This included content analysis, defined as a “research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use” [44]. Content analysis, therefore, refers to the systematic evaluation of texts (e.g. documents of various forms and verbal communication) and converting the qualitative data into quantitative data. The output of the qualitative analysis in this study was coded and categorised to confirm underlying assumptions.

##### A. SAMPLE SIZE AND STRUCTURE

The sample size should be appropriate for the analysis that is planned. If descriptive statistics are to be used,

e.g. frequencies, then nearly any sample size will suffice [45]. Convenience non-probability sampling was used to select the entities for the research based on the screening of Australian TV broadcasting. TV spots running on 7 Mate, 9Go!, 9 HD Sydney, 10 Peach and 10 BOLD were considered. Every new unique TV spot was added to the sample until the set quota of 50 TV spots was reached. Key parameters were recorded for every TV spot to enable further processing and analysis. These included the TV channel, Product Category, Brand, Product, Campaign, Slogan, Description, Type of the campaign, Purpose, Frequency, and URL on screen. Home & Garden (9x), Travel (6x), and Online services (5x) were the most frequent product categories. Details on what was shown in the spot were recorded as the Description field in the data set. For campaigns with no website promoted, a URL was identified by searching online for selected keywords related to the campaign. This enabled the researchers to determine whether there is a special campaign landing page created or a standard company / product website ranks for these searches. This first research phase was accomplished between the 9th and 15th of January 2019.

##### B. KEYWORD ANALYSIS

For each campaign, 100-149 keywords relevant to the campaign were defined with a mean of 128 and median of 133. Keywords were selected by the researchers to accurately reflect the key message of the TV spot. The keywords related to the product, communicated message, and brand. Three types of keywords were selected based on the way users conduct a search for product and information: 1) Short-tail – short search phrases containing one or a few words only, usually up to three, e.g. 2 seater sofas or small sofas; 2) Long-tail – longer search phrases containing a more precise enquiry, with or without location, e.g. discount small sofas online or buy black sofas near me; 3) Brand – keywords containing the brand, e.g. Nick Scali sofas. Sometimes, a fourth category was added containing long-tail branded keywords. Based on the nature of the product and the campaign, keywords were location-neutral or location-specific. Keywords had various monthly search volumes and were selected to reflect search phrases that would be used by consumers in response to the TV spot. The second research phase was accomplished between the 20th January and 10th February 2019.

##### C. DETERMINATION OF SEARCH RANKINGS

Using the tool SE Ranking, the position of the website in the search results was identified for every keyword. This was done for all 50 websites relating to the TV campaigns. Australian Google (google.com.au) was used to distinguish between mobile and desktop search rankings. The maximum position considered was 100, representing the last result on the tenth SERP. Paid and organic results were tracked separately. SE Ranking was also used to calculate the organic site visibility score, ranging from 0 (none) to 100 (maximum site visibility). This score is sometimes referred to as search

visibility [46]. However, site visibility will be used in this paper to differentiate between this score and other metrics relevant to assessing visibility in searches, such as the number of results in the top SERP positions or average search rankings. Site visibility is a complex factor that takes both individual ranking and monthly search volume for every keyword into consideration and thus, is more complex than average search ranking. High site visibility indicates that the company website is highly visible for keywords that are frequently used by users. Determination of search rankings by creating SE Ranking tracking campaigns and collecting data was performed between the 12th and 15th of February 2019.

#### D. DATA CLEANING AND PREPARATION

For the individual rankings for each campaign, values representing positions in SERPs needed to be adjusted. If the website did not rank within the first 100 results, it was represented by a hyphen in the data. This was replaced by the value 100 in order to have all values with an integer number. Furthermore, individual ranking data for every campaign was aggregated into one data set so the analysis could be performed on the complete data.

#### E. DATA ANALYSIS

Positions were further analysed and clustered. Subtotals for the number of keywords with rankings within the first one (Top 1), three (Top 3), five (Top 5), and ten results (Top 10) were calculated. This was done for paid rankings, organic rankings, and total rankings considering the better of two values if both paid and organic rankings were detected for a keyword. Average rankings were calculated for each of the advertisers and for organic rankings, as well as separately for each platform (mobile, desktop). Average rankings represent a mean value of individual keyword rankings for all keywords included in the tracking campaign. As with the top positions, average rankings were calculated for paid search results and organic search results separately. Following this, the higher position from both paid and organic ranking was used to calculate average search rankings for every campaign. Descriptive statistics were used to achieve greater insight into the data, in order to compare and interpret it effectively.

#### V. FINDINGS

Given that data for paid and organic search rankings were collected separately, these can be evaluated separately or together. The following results indicate the performance of TV advertisers in paid search results. 19 out of 50 advertisers (38%) were paying for Google Ads to be displayed for at least one of the tracked keywords. Some of these, however, had only one keyword covered, whereas others included many tracked keywords in their Google Ads campaigns. For the advertiser with the most keywords covered (A017), Google was showing advertisements for 58.04% of all keywords (65 out of 112). Five advertisers with the highest percentage of keywords showing paid Google Ads are listed in Table 1. The mean value of the percentage of keywords

**TABLE 1. Advertisers with the highest percentage of keywords showing paid Google Ads.**

Campaign	No. of keywords with PPC	Total keywords	%
A017	65	112	58.04%
A042	48	143	33.57%
A012	29	102	28.43%
A037	38	146	26.03%
A014	25	100	25.00%

from all campaigns with a Google Ad was 5.24%, with the median being 0%. The median value of the percentage of keywords triggering a Google Ad was 8.70%, considering only those advertisers who had a Google Ad displayed for at least one keyword. In total, Google Ads were displayed for 324 out of 6,382 keywords, representing 5.08%. The standard deviation in the percentage of keywords covered by Google Ads by advertisers was 11.23%. In most cases, a Google Ad was shown on the first position in the SERP (median for the paid search rankings was 1), however, other positions up to 6 were detected.

With organic rankings, the mobile and desktop search rankings were analysed separately. The results were very similar, with only occasional differences. This has been confirmed by calculating the correlation between these rankings with the Pearson correlation coefficient  $r = 0.997$  ( $p < 0.001$ ) being very close to the theoretical maximum. Average rankings for both platforms were calculated and used for further analysis, while keeping the data separated for comparison purposes. As with paid advertising, notable differences were identified amongst the TV campaigns in terms of organic search visibility for relevant keywords. Some of the advertisers had a substantial number of keywords for which they ranked organically in the first place or within the first three, five or ten results. Table 2 illustrates the situation by showing insights into the values distribution for organic search ranking on mobile devices. Percentage values are displayed to allow for direct comparison between TV campaigns, addressing the fact that the number of keywords assessed varied across campaigns.

**TABLE 2. Percentage of keywords with organic mobile rankings on the first google SERP.**

Indicator	Top 1	Top 3	Top 5	Top 10
Minimum	0.00%	4.76%	8.73%	12.70%
Maximum	53.33%	65.00%	74.31%	83.33%
Mean	17.42%	23.13%	27.69%	34.67%
Median	15.97%	20.16%	24.44%	31.08%
Std deviation	10.49%	13.78%	15.90%	18.44%

For the website of the TV advertiser A012, the lowest number of keyword searches placed his website in the first position (0.00%), it was ranked within the first three results

for 7.84% of keyword searches, within first five for 10.78% and within the first 10 results for 12.75% searches. Thus, for 12.75% of the keywords, the link to the website was displayed on the first Google SERP. On the contrary, the most successful advertiser in these terms (A010) was ranked on the first Google SERP for 83.33% of keywords.

The same statistical calculations for desktop organic rankings confirm the similarity of mobile and desktop search rankings. The mean and median values are also very similar. The average percentage of keywords that trigger search results showing the website of the TV advertiser in the first position is 17.37% (desktop searches) and 17.42% (mobile searches). Other values - including standard deviation - also correlate. Details are shown in Table 3.

**TABLE 3. Percentage of keywords with organic desktop rankings on the first Google SERP.**

Indicator	Top 1	Top 3	Top 5	Top 10
Minimum	0.00%	3.17%	8.73%	11.90%
Maximum	48.33%	63.33%	74.31%	84.72%
Mean	17.37%	23.26%	27.99%	35.00%
Median	15.84%	19.29%	24.51%	30.63%
Std deviation	10.21%	14.00%	16.29%	19.09%

An average of mobile and desktop organic rankings was calculated to indicate the overall organic search visibility. Table 4 shows five advertisers with the best search visibility when both platforms were considered, with the percentage of rankings in one of the first three positions (Top 3). These are especially important as they guarantee the most clicks, having the highest click-through rates.

**TABLE 4. Advertisers with the highest percentage of rankings in the first three positions.**

Campaign	Top 1	Top 3	Top 5	Top 10
A011	50.83%	64.17%	67.08%	74.17%
A010	31.60%	56.94%	74.31%	84.03%
A009	26.39%	49.54%	55.56%	64.81%
A032	32.65%	48.64%	59.86%	72.11%
A033	31.45%	45.97%	51.21%	60.08%

Except for A033, these websites also had the highest relative number of rankings on the first SERP (Top 10).

Taking the average organic ranking for all tracked keywords for each advertiser into account, advertiser A010 was the most visible in searches, with an average organic position of 13.3 on mobiles and 13.5 on desktops. Thus, on average, the link to the website was displayed in the first half of the second SERP for this advertiser. Advertisers who had almost no rankings except for the branded keywords were on the other side of the spectrum. The worst performing TV advertiser was A049 with an average organic ranking of 84.7, both on mobiles and desktops. This means that the link to

their website was, on average, displayed in the middle of the ninth Google SERP. The mean average organic ranking was 50.0 for mobile and 49.6 for desktop, with a median value of 45.8 for mobiles and 45.2 for desktops. The distribution of average organic search ranking values is illustrated by the standard deviation of  $s = 22.3$  for searches performed on mobile devices and  $s = 22.1$  for desktop computers.

Table 5 lists five advertisers with the best organic search visibility, measured as the average position in searches (the lower the average position, the higher the visibility in search).

**TABLE 5. Advertisers with the lowest average position in organic search results.**

Campaign	Desktop	Mobile	Overall
A010	13.5	13.3	13.4
A034	19.5	20.5	20.0
A017	20.5	20.6	20.6
A011	20.7	20.6	20.6
A032	20.6	21.1	20.9

Three of the five websites with the lowest average position in organic searches were also amongst the five best performing websites in terms of the percentage of keywords for which they ranked amongst the first three results on the SERP.

Interesting insights into the performance of evaluated websites in searches can be gained by looking at the site visibility score calculated by SE Ranking. Unlike the average position, this score, on top of the actual position, also takes the monthly search volumes for each keyword into account. Table 6 shows the analysis of site visibility values across the research sample.

**TABLE 6. Organic site visibility scores across all websites.**

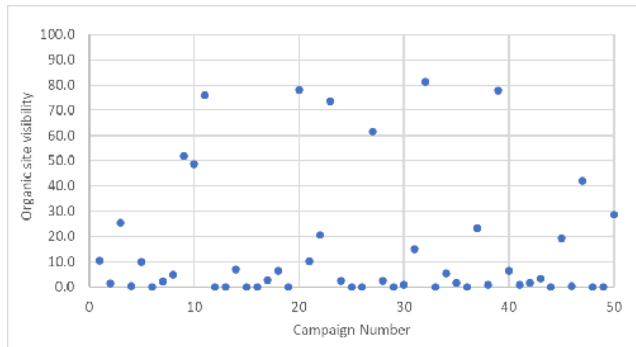
Indicator	Min	Max	Mean	Median	Std deviation
Site visibility	0.00	81.30	16.14	2.65	25.23

Notable differences are detected between the websites in terms of site visibility, ranging from 0 up to 81.30, with a standard deviation of 25.23. Table 7 shows advertisers with the highest site visibility.

**TABLE 7. Top performing websites in terms of site visibility score by SE Ranking.**

Campaign	Site Visibility
A032	81.3
A020	78.2
A039	77.9
A011	76.1
A023	73.5

Most of the websites featured had a very low organic site visibility, confirmed by a median of 2.65. The scatter chart



**FIGURE 1.** Distribution of organic site visibility scores for Australian TV campaigns.

on Figure 1 shows more insights into the value distribution. The majority of the websites have a site visibility below 10.0, a few websites have a medium site visibility of around 10 – 42 and a small group of websites have high site visibility of 48+.

Finally, paid and organic rankings were combined, and in cases where the website was ranking both in paid and organic results for a keyword, the better of the two values (higher ranking indicated by a lower number) was selected. This should give the most precise view of the overall visibility in searches for the TV campaign-related keywords. Table 8 shows the percentage of keywords for which the websites of TV advertisers achieved the highest ranking for searches on desktop computers.

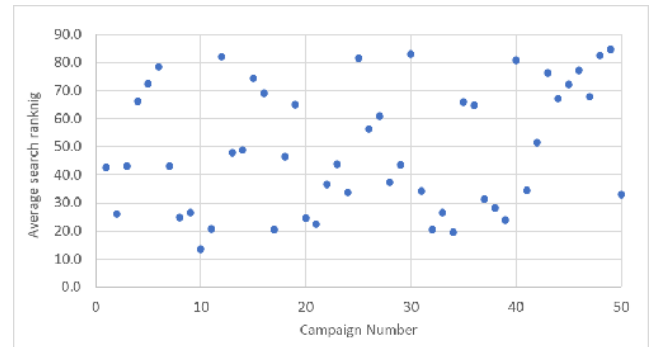
**TABLE 8.** Percentage of keywords with search rankings on the first Google SERP on desktops.

Indicator	Top 1	Top 3	Top 5	Top 10
Minimum	0.00%	3.17%	8.73%	11.90%
Maximum	48.33%	63.33%	74.31%	84.72%
Mean	18.88%	25.22%	30.03%	36.78%
Median	16.75%	22.99%	27.32%	32.18%
Std deviation	10.37%	14.56%	16.90%	19.65%

As can be seen from Table 8, the minimum and maximum values remain the same as when purely organic desktop search rankings were calculated (Table 4), with the mean and median higher than those of organic searches alone. Thus, the search positions of websites having the least and the most keywords triggering results in the top positions in relation to the overall number of keywords did not have paid search advertising in place as this would have increased their positions. The main changes happened in the middle of the spectrum. The distribution of average desktop search ranking values illustrates the scatter chart used for Figure 2.

**VI. DISCUSSION**

Notable differences were identified between the performance of TV advertisers’ websites in terms of search visibility for the TV campaign-related keywords. Some of the advertisers and/or their marketing agencies reflected their knowledge of



**FIGURE 2.** Distribution of average desktop search ranking values for Australian TV campaigns.

the customers’ decision-making process and their journey through the collection of information from various resources in their search engine marketing activities. None of the websites were sufficiently visible in organic search results and thus, paid advertising was expected to fill in for the keywords with lower organic visibility. However, only 19 out of 50 advertisers had PPC in place for at least one keyword. Of these, only 5 websites had paid advertisements shown for at least 20% of the keywords. The low mean value (5.24%) and median (0%) of the percentage of keywords from all campaigns with a Google Ad suggest that the extent of using paid search advertising to increase search visibility for campaign-related keywords is low (RQ 1).

In a number of cases, advertisers were also paying for advertisements to rank for branded keywords they ranked organically for. Sometimes, it might make sense to advertise for an own brand despite having a high organic ranking. The reason is that Google Ads continue to take up more space on the SERP and some users won’t reach the organic search results at all. However, if this is the case, it does not make sense not to pay for promoting search results for other campaign-related keywords. This indicates that despite these TV advertisers and their marketing agencies being aware of the importance of search visibility, they do not take the visibility for the TV campaign-related keywords into account. This naturally leads to decreased effectiveness of the communication campaign, due to losing people/prospective customers who have shown interest in the TV spot.

Some of the organic rankings, whether measured by the relative number of Top 3, Top 5, or Top 10 results, or by average positions in search or site visibility rankings, were significantly above the average. Graph 1 clearly illustrates the situation, showing that a few websites stand out, most being placed in the bottom area with low organic site visibility. Site visibility score is a good indicator of organic search visibility because it predicts the percentage of organic traffic the website can get from its rankings. The site visibility indicator should be interpreted within context. Especially for communication campaigns, it should not be treated as a standalone figure, since there are some general and branded keywords for which the websites naturally rank higher. These tend to have significantly higher search volumes compared to spe-

cific keywords extracted from the communication messages shown in TV spots. Thus, a TV advertiser can get a relatively high site visibility score even without sufficiently ranking for specific TV campaign-related keywords. Significant differences were detected between the advertisers in terms of the site visibility, ranging from 0 to 81.3, with a standard deviation of 25.23. Thus, the best performing website in terms of organic site visibility (A032) potentially attracted 81.3% of the organic traffic from the 147 keywords included in the tracking campaign. In terms of average position in search results, only one advertiser was able to reach a value under 20, which would mean that on average, his website would rank within the first two SERPs.

Some of the advertisers organically ranked almost exclusively for branded keywords. Campaign A002 serve as an example. The website was ranking in the first position for 32 keywords both on mobile and desktop. However, the number of rankings within the Top 3, Top 5 and Top 10 did not naturally increase. This advertiser had the same number of positions in the Top 3 (32) and just one more in the Top 5 (33) and Top 10 (33). This means that except for the branded keywords for which the site ranked no.1, there only was one other keyword out of 116 for which this website ranked on the first SERP. Different metrics can tell different stories. This website received almost no traffic from searches for the campaign-related keywords except the no. 1 rankings, however, the average position of 25.6 looks quite favourable compared to other campaigns.

Considering the total search visibility of websites of TV advertisers, reflecting both paid and organic positions, different results were calculated to answer RQ 2. Some of the advertisers had almost no first position rankings (the least performing website did not have any first position) and Top 3 rankings (advertisers A025 ranking for 3.17% of keywords within one of the first three results). The lowest relative number of rankings achieved for Top 5 positions was 8.73%, with one advertiser ranking in the first SERP (Top 10) for 11.90% of keywords. There are notable differences in the percentage of keywords returning the website within one of these top positions between the advertisers, with the standard deviation ranging from 10.37% (Top 1) to 19.65% (Top 10). The best advertisers ranked within the Top 1 (48.33% for advertiser A011), Top 3 (63.33% for advertiser A011), Top 5 (74.31% for advertiser A010) and Top 10 (84.72% for advertiser A010) for a significant number of their keywords.

In relation to the average position in searches, similar results for desktop and mobile rankings were calculated. The average search ranking, reflecting both paid and organic results, ranged from 13.5 (result for any of the tracked keywords was on the beginning of the second SERP for this advertiser) to 84.7 (on average, this advertiser's website ranked in the half of the ninth Google SERP). A standard deviation of 22.1 was calculated and thus, the average search ranking values varied between different advertisers (RQ 3).

There are several implications for theory and practice from these research results. It has been argued that visibility

in searches is a keystone component of integrated marketing communication. Without ensuring proper visibility for campaign-related keywords, advertisers will lose the customer in this process. Understanding the relationships between TV advertising, consumer interest, consumer search activity, cross-session and cross-device searches, and product sales is of paramount importance when designing an optimal customer journey.

The analysis has shown that websites of many companies are not sufficiently visible in search results related to their communication campaigns that include TV advertisements. To get the most from the potential of the organic traffic for the campaign-related keywords, it can be recommended to have an average ranking below 3. This would ensure that, on average, the company websites are ranking within the Top 3 search results and therefore get the most clicks. The situation with the best performing advertisers is in line with expectations as some of the keywords from the communication campaign can be very specific and it takes time to get organic rankings for them. For this reason, PPC is a great tool to complement organic rankings. However, a significant portion of advertisers had very low visibility in searches, whether PPC, SEO or combined rankings were considered. This can lead to the conclusion that most advertisers are not aware of the changed online search behaviour patterns of consumers or were not able to reflect it in their communication campaigns. Improving the search visibility can significantly increase the effectiveness of their campaigns and conversions received as a direct effect of the campaign. As the deployment of the campaign is typically managed by a marketing or advertising agency, it can be expected that they will ensure this happens and the offline campaign is efficiently connected to the online environment. However, as the research results prove, this does not happen in most of the cases.

## VII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Three areas of limitations of the undertaken research were identified. The first limitation relates to the way search visibility is assessed for selected television campaigns. The selected methodology enabled the researchers to see the status quo – the resulting positions in SERPs for selected keywords. Using different research methods - e.g. in-depth interviews with marketing agencies and TV advertisers - can help discover their goals, motivations, internal discussions, and other motivation to ensure sufficient search visibility for the keywords related to the TV spot(s). It can also shed more light on why the TV commercials do not have sufficient footprint in both organic and paid search results. Secondly, the methodology relied on suggesting relevant keywords for every TV spot. The list of keywords would contain both important short tail keywords with higher search volumes and a variety of long tail keywords representing the commonly used search patterns of consumers. Despite the effort to create a comprehensive keywords list for every campaign, it needs to be acknowledged that it will never be complete. Especially



TABLE 9. List of TV campaigns.

ID	Category	Brand	Campaign
A001	Furniture	Nick Scali	Sale on furniture
A002	Sports	Anaconda	Buy a surf
A003	Education	University of New England	Get good education
A004	Food	McDonald	New Fanta flavour
A005	Automotive	Mitsubishi	Clearance
A006	Travel	Avalon Water Ways	Not overcrowded place
A007	Home & Garden	Bunnings Warehouse	Enjoy the summer
A008	FMCG	Coca Cola	Refresh your summer
A009	Office	Office Works	Modern education
A010	Home & Garden	Bunnings Warehouse	Enjoy BBQ
A011	Health	AncestryDNA	Find your roots
A012	Accommodation	Hotels combined	Check prices of hotels
A013	Travel	Dreamworld	Free time activities and ZOO
A014	Fashion	Stepone	New underwear for men
A015	Cosmetics	Hamilton sunscreen	Don't burn your skin
A016	Food	Hungry Jacks	Summer refreshment with new drinks
A017	Travel	Booking	Enjoy the world
A018	Automotive	Mitsubishi	Clearance
A019	Bank	GetCreditScore	Get your credit score
A020	Home & Garden	Snooze	Sleep well
A021	Education	Babbel	Speak new language
A022	Travel	Wotif	Book your vacation
A023	Travel	Trivago	Compare hotel prices
A024	Insurance	Australian Seniors	Protect your family costs
A025	Home & Garden	Vistaprint	Share your memories
A026	Education	Blinkist	Read / listen everywhere
A027	Automotive	Hyundai	Drive through terrain
A028	Online service	Square Space	Build it, sell it etc.
A029	Travel	Gumbuya	Enjoy the park
A030	Cosmetics	Proactive	Get 30% off
A031	Health	Molemap	Early detection
A032	Home & Garden	Bunning Warehouse	Tape everything
A033	Non-profit	Save the Children	Donation
A034	Insurance	Real Insurance	Get Insurance
A035	FMCG	My Dog	Dog food recipes
A036	Non-profit	Kids Helpline	Call us with any problem
A037	Insurance	Choosi	Insurance
A038	Health	Chemist Warehouse	Pill supplements
A039	Home & Garden	Hoselink	Strong rope
A040	Home & Garden	EarlySettler	Big sale

with long tail keywords, where hundreds (if not thousands) of long tail keywords can be generated for every TV campaign. Thus, examining the search visibility of the same TV spot by different researchers would result in slightly modified results. Thirdly, resources other than the main company/product website could be included when assessing search visibility of

TABLE 9. (Continued.) List of TV campaigns.

A041	Online service	Aussie Broadband	Good internet connection
A042	Insurance	InsuranceLine	Funeral and life insurance
A043	Health	Monash IVF	Pregnancy program
A044	Online service	Lendi	Get a right home loan
A045	FMCG	Aldi	Cereal bars
A046	Online service	Audible	Listen books like it was music
A047	Home & Garden	Play Doh	Various toys
A048	Bank	Wallet Wizard	Money for new electronics
A049	Home & Garden	Arise Solar	Energy for house
A050	Online service	Foxtel	Enjoy all sports

products and brands featured in TV commercials, including images, videos, and social media profiles.

### VIII. CONCLUSION

The research results revealed notable differences in search visibility of websites for TV campaign-related keywords between TV advertisers. This represents a challenge for companies striving to optimise the delivery of their communication message throughout the whole integrated chain of traditional and online media. The situation also indicates that marketing managers need to obtain greater knowledge and insight into the current challenges of consumer behaviour regarding purchasing decision-making and the use of online searches in this process. This will enable them to ensure the agency delivers the required level of search visibility which is easy to achieve using a combination of PPC and SEO. A reasonable part of the campaign-related keywords is quite unique and there is not much competition in organic search results. Appropriate SEO applied to the campaign landing page and other websites of the company can cover most of the required Top 3 SERP rankings. For the rest of the keywords, a PPC campaign should be in place to guarantee the placement on the top of the SERP, to reach people actively looking for the product information and to send them to campaign-related websites. Without doing so, the significant investments into TV advertising will not be used effectively and the communication campaign will not deliver to its potential.

The current study focused on the connection between TV campaigns and search visibility. For future research, other factors and media affecting the customer journey from the initial stage to the purchasing decision could be considered. Ideas for follow-up research include: 1) Examine the process of creating and launching communication campaigns with agencies and advertisers responsible for TV spots with both high and low search visibility to understand the reasons that resulted in the search visibility achieved; 2) Include communications on social media in the research to evaluate their contribution towards crafting a fully integrated communication campaign; 3) Examine whether the advertisers use campaign-related remarketing to remind themselves which users have already visited their website; 4) Assess search visibility of multiple websites operated by the advertisers

separately (e.g. a corporate website, product website, and campaign landing page on a separate domain) and combine the results; 5) Compare the situation in different markets, either from the perspective of an industry (e.g. the financial sector versus home and garden products) or geographical perspective (comparing different countries). However, generating a statistically sound comparison of two or more industries can be challenging due to the size of the samples available at the time. Originally, this was the intention of researchers for this paper, but not enough TV advertisements from a specific sector/product category were shown within the selected time period.

## APPENDIX

See Table 9.

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